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Polygraph

Central Intelligence Agency

Washington D C 20505

14 FEB 1986

OCA 86-0444

The Honorable Don Edwards
Chairman
Subcommittee on Civil
and Constitutional Rights
Committee on the Judiciary
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am replying to your letter of January 28, 1986 to the Director of Central Intelligence concerning personnel security investigations.

The Central Intelligence Agency was not involved in the "lesson plan" or "classroom hand-out" materials which your letter indicates were used by a Department of the Army polygraph training school before their use was ordered discontinued. The Agency recognizes that personnel security investigations can, by nature, appear to be intrusive. Nonetheless, the Agency works to insure that all such investigations under its jurisdiction are properly conducted and inquire only into those areas which involve legitimate security concerns.

Personnel security investigations are, of course, only one part of the Agency's personnel security program. The purpose of this program is to insure that all persons hired and retained by the Agency possess the extremely high degree of trustworthiness required to deal with this nation's most sensitive national security information. Determinations of trustworthiness are, however, not made in a vacuum. They hinge, instead, on the particulars of each case. Further, the sorts of information which may be required to reach a determination of trustworthiness in a particular case and the means by which that information is assembled can involve some of the most sensitive intelligence sources and methods information which the Agency possesses.

Your letter requests that the Agency furnish a witness to testify, among other things, on the relationship "demonstrated through a scientifically valid method" between the sorts of issues raised by the Army materials and a "proclivity to commit

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espionage". Because of the Agency's view that determinations of trustworthiness cannot be made in a vacuum, the Agency does not believe that a general discussion on the subject would be particularly useful, especially a discussion which had as its reference criteria not generated by the Agency and apparently discontinued by the Army. Further, were the discussion to turn to specific sources and methods used by the Agency, I fear that it would fall within an area, intelligence oversight, which has been committed to the jurisdiction of the intelligence committees. It is for these reasons the Agency is reluctant to provide a witness as described in your letter.

Let me, however, suggest the following. If, at the time the Subcommittees' proceedings in this matter have been completed you still believe the record needs supplementation, the Agency would be willing to discuss with your staff the possibility of providing, in an appropriate format, written supplementary materials.

I hope that this is responsive to your letter. A copy of this letter is also being forwarded to Chairwoman Schroeder.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

David D. Gries
Director, Office of Congressional Affairs

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